

Hurricanes, Wildin Wages, and Disney's Billion Dollar Bet

August 19, 2024

- **Wildin Wages** – Compensation costs for civilian workers increased 0.9% for the quarter ended June 2024, bringing the 12-month increase to 4.1%. The 12-month average from July 2022 through June 2023 was 4.6%. (source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- **Peak Performance** – The Dow Jones Industrial Average finished out July 31, 2024 at 40,842.79, up from 39,118.86 on June 28, 2024 (source: Yahoo Finance).
- **S&P 500 Winners** – Mohawk Industries Inc, a flooring company, was the July 2024 top performer in the S&P 500 with a 41.8% gain. Stanley Black & Decker, a tooling company, was close behind at 32.2% (source: Y Charts).
- **Any Open Positions?** – Unemployment rose 0.2% to 4.3% in July 2024, with nonfarm payroll increasing 114,000. However, the number of unemployed individuals increased 352,000 to 7.2 million in July 2024, which is higher compared to 5.9 million in July 2023 (source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- **Not So Fast** – Synopsys, a California-based automation company, announced plans to acquire Ansys, an engineering simulation and 3D design company, in a \$35 billion cash and stock deal. However, the deal has fallen under scrutiny by the UK's Competition and Markets Authority for potentially impacting competition in Britain. No formal investigation has been launched yet (source: Reuters).
- **Slight Surge** – The S&P 500 rallied 1.2% in July 2024 to 5,522.30, up from 5,460.48 on June 28, 2024. The real estate sector had the largest July 2024 gain at 7.24%. Close behind was the utilities sector at 6.82% and the financial sector at 6.40%. The technology sector was the only sector with a loss in July 2024, with a -3.28% return (source: Y Charts).
- **Overseas Opportunities** – Disney, a mass media and entertainment company, announced plans to spend \$1 billion each year in the UK, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa for the next five years to produce new movies and TV shows. This comes after "Inside Out 2" collected \$1.6 billion in global ticket sales (source: Reuters).
- **S&P 500 Losers** – Dexcom, a glucose monitoring company, was the worst performer of the S&P 500 in July 2024, with a -40.2% return. This follows disappointing Q2 financials and a slashed outlook for the remainder of the year. CrowdStrike Holdings Inc, the software company responsible for the mass tech outage in July 2024, saw a share price decline of 39.5% (source: Y Charts).
- **Success Story** – Hampton Morris became the first U.S. man to win a medal in Olympic weightlifting since Mario Martinez and Guy Carlton in 1984. The 20-year-old trains in his garage and took home a bronze medal (source: Yahoo Sports).

- **Hitting Hard** – On July 1, 2024, Hurricane Beryl became the earliest Category 5 storm in the Atlantic Basin to-date, causing major damage on islands in the Caribbean Sea. Hurricane Beryl was downgraded to a Category 1 hurricane when it made landfall in Texas (source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).

Definitions and Indexes

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